



**For Immediate Release
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Registration is Climbing for The Great Park Pursuit

*Teams sign on to win prizes and enjoy nature in
the outdoor adventure contest sponsored by
the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation*

BOSTON – With the kick-off event planned for May 19, registration is well underway for The Great Park Pursuit, an outdoor adventure contest where teams of families and friends take part in games and activities in state parks across Massachusetts. Nearly 200 teams have already signed up for a chance to win prizes including kayaks, mountain bikes, and other great outdoor gear in the six-week event that runs May 19 through June 23.

“More than the great prizes, this is a terrific opportunity to engage your whole family in getting outside and learning more about the amazing natural areas we have here in the Massachusetts state parks,” said Priscilla Geigis, Acting Commissioner of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

Modeled after popular reality TV adventure games, The Great Park Pursuit includes activities such as tent pitching, hiking and fishing, as well as more educational offerings such as birds of prey programs, safe campfire building instruction, and tips on how to milk a cow.

In order to win major prizes – which include camping, mountain biking and kayaking packages from Eastern Mountain Sports; a state-of-the-art hiking gear package from Timberland, and dozens of free giveaways – teams must register on-line at the official contest web site, **www.greatparkpursuit.org**. Once they do, registrants will receive a packet of information, including contest rules and helpful hints. **Registration will remain open until May 19.**

Beginning at the Blue Hills Reservation in Milton on Saturday, May 19, The Great Park Pursuit will offer a variety of exciting outdoor activities every Saturday for six weeks at a different state park each week. To find the next Saturday’s location, teams will receive specific clues on the game website.

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The rules of the contest are fairly simple. Teams are defined broadly: they simply must have at least one member age 18 or over and at least one member under 18 to compete. Points are given for those participating in five out of the six park activities. Not all team members need to participate in all events, allowing groups to “dispatch” members to certain locations. Those who have completed at least 5 out of the 6 contest days will compete for the grand prizes. They will also receive a free one-year family membership to Mass Audubon, giving them free admission to all Mass Audubon locations and other member benefits.

The Great Park Pursuit is aimed at encouraging people, particularly families with children, to spend less time on sedentary pursuits like video games and more time actively enjoying the great outdoors, particularly the 450,000 acres of state parks, forests and watershed lands throughout Massachusetts. The game is part of a larger, regional effort called “No Child Left Inside,” started in Connecticut, which promotes healthy lifestyles and environmental stewardship in young people.

With indoor, technology-based activities replacing more traditional outdoor play, experts warn that our next generation will be too disconnected from nature to appreciate its role as environmental steward.

“When I was young, I spent a lot of time outdoors, hiking and camping with my family, and I learned from that our role in protecting the balance of nature,” said Geigis. “We need that sense of stewardship in our next generation, now more than ever, as we confront major environmental threats such as global warming.”

To register a team or get more information on DCR’s Great Park Pursuit, go to www.greatparkpursuit.org. If you still have questions after checking out the website, you can email parks.pursuit@state.ma.us or call 617-626-1450. Let the games begin!

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